

**PLEASE EMAIL AILEEN@COLLEGECAMPAIGN.ORG TO SIGN ON
TO THE COALITION SUPPORT LETTER.
THANK YOU!**

May 21, 2015

The Honorable Mark Leno
Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
State Capitol, Room 5019
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Shirley Weber
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Community College Basic Skills and Student Outcomes Transformation Program – SUPPORT

Dear Honorable Mark Leno and Shirley Weber,

As staunch advocates of higher education access and student completion, we recognize that we can no longer afford to tinker on the edges of remedial education reform. This is why we applaud the Governor for prioritizing investments in remedial education redesign through the proposed *Community College Basic Skills and Student Outcomes Transformation Program*.

California community colleges are the gateway to opportunity for nearly 2.3 million students each year, promising access to the California Dream. Unfortunately, the troubling reality is that too many students will never achieve that dream. **Over 70 percent of students entering California community colleges are assessed as underprepared for college-level English or math and roughly two-thirds of these same students-- who are then placed in remedial courses-- will fail to complete a degree/certificate or transfer to a four-year college.** Students placed in remedial courses get caught in a basic skills bottleneck that too often does not let them enter college level classes that will ensure they can reach their college dreams and be prepared for good jobs.

At the same time, promising national and statewide initiatives aimed at increasing student completion of remedial education have demonstrated great gains. Across the country, courageous educators have crafted innovative ways to assess and place students, deliver math and English remediation, and provide student supports. In these pilot efforts, students' odds of completing college-level English and math



and/or achieving a certificate or degree increased significantly. Yet, despite the fact that the California community colleges have renewed their commitment to improving student success – less than a third of the 112 campuses offer new approaches. Furthermore, where community college campuses are engaging in these new approaches, their efforts are often limited to one or two course sections and are not available for the benefit of all students in remedial classes.

The *Community College Basic Skills and Student Outcomes Transformation Program* will provide a one-time investment of \$60 million Proposition 98 General Fund to assist community colleges in improving delivery of remedial instruction by adopting or expanding the use of evidence based models of placement, remediation, and student support that accelerate the progress of underprepared students toward achieving postsecondary educational and career goals.

Investments today to redesign remedial education will secure California's economic future and ensure that our students have the tools to succeed in college. For the reasons stated above, we support the Governor's proposal for the Basic Skills and Student Outcomes Transformation Program. We ask for your continued leadership in championing this critical investment in student success.

Sincerely,

Jessie Ryan
*Executive Vice President
The Campaign for College
Opportunity*

Rona Sheriff
*Co-Director
California EDGE Coalition*

Barbara E. Baran
*Co-Director
California EDGE Coalition*

This letter reflects the following organizations' support of the Community College Basic Skills and Student Outcomes Transformation Program.